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2nd class w/ J. Cofer
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A Writing Space

Of the five entrances to "the" house the most commonly used one is through the carport. It leads into the long, two-sided kitchen. The kitchen melds into a family eating area. The table there is large by most standards, as is the entire house. When the Daniels family bought the house 18 years ago space was needed for five rapidly growing children. Now the large "kitchen" table, sitting in the recessed, well-windowed bay area usually has two adults seated there. The 22 year old son may be on the premises between his schoolings and jobs. The 10 (soon to be 13) grandchildren, along with their parents, may descend upon this house, either without warning — or at a given time. The last big gathering was in late October 1989. Then this table and the one in the adjacent, more formal dining room seated 21 folks for Saturday dinner, 16 for breakfast and 21 for Sunday lunch.

These two tables get a lot of use other than for eating space. The man of the house likes to spread the daily paper and the mail upon the kitchen table and may leave them there for days much to the dislike of the woman of the house. He may put out the electronic typewriter to "run a few address labels" then continue finding reasons to leave it there for days. His computer has occupied the dining room, almost in totality - with the printer, the boxes of papers and software - for long stretches of time. After 37 years of nagging for neatness -- or at least equal space the writer has decided it can be lived with! She has, in her teaching days, often used the dining room table to spread out piles of student papers and notebooks for a few days of grading. Two workaholics pushing papers can spread out over a lot of square feet!

In addition to family visits and piles of assorted papers in the table areas, the television is a definite no-no factor. The

husband, far more so than the wife, has an "itchy tv button" finger. Kids, my own and my students, have argued they can do homework to the tune of tv but this writer finds that incredibly unbelievable!

The foregone conclusion is neither of these tables can or should serve as this writer's writing space. This is a first serious (determined) effort to do lengthy creative writing. A place not subject to displacement or conflict is a must! Being a creature of habit and possessing a need to put down roots there is only one satisfactory solution for a "private and individual" writing area. Even this may be questioned by offspring returning for visits but they can soon learn this is a predetermined occupation of space. If there is an overflow for sleeping the sofa-beds in the living and family rooms will be used before the bed in the "writing room". Wow! Am I really being this assertive? Yes.

Where is this space? From the kitchen table on the left and the dining

area and sunken living room on the right we progress on through the family room and into the hall. The first two doors on the right lead to the front foyer and to the guest bedroom with a walk-through bathroom. On the left are doors to the basement stairs and the master bedroom. None of the spaces are enticing for locating a place to write on a regular basis.

The far right end of the hall has a door leading into what <u>was</u> the "girls' bedroom". The windows on two walls offer pleasant viewing - out over the patio and garden. Year-round birds may be seen in nearby trees - not as a distraction but an enjoyment when eyes, fingers, or the brain need a rest.

The soft pink walls are pleasantly warm - important to this cold-natured person. A pair of natural (re)finished oak typing tables (discarded from a long ago typing classroom) offers the proper height and enough space to write. They will not allow for much clutter and this writer is prone to clutter, therefore limited space

can be a blessing.

The three-way lamp and a wall flourescent light are used when the overhead light is not sufficient. The windows may offer adequate illumination on clear, bright days.

No pattern or time for writing has been established but it will probably be done more between 8 p.m. and midnight. These hours proved best for the many thousands of papers graded after school time. When there is enough material coming forth from this brain the daylight hours could be used without interruptions.

The adjoining (walk-through) bathroom will help cut down on the temptation to wander. It has been the source of cool water to give the face a refreshing splash!

If writing can be done in this house, if this writer possesses the ability to write, then the blessings of space and a comfortable setting should be incentive enough to use what is being instilled in this brain during this class.

A good feeling prevails!